

Western Kentucky University news for the Council on Postsecondary Education, June 2015

For more WKU news, visit [www.wku.edu/news](http://www.wku.edu/news).



*Carol Martin "Bill" Gatton speaks during the expansion announcement of the Gatton Academy as WKU President Gary Ransdell and Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear listen.*

### **Gifts from Bill Gatton, others, fund expansion of Gatton Academy**

A gift from Carol Martin "Bill" Gatton will allow the Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science at WKU to expand from 120 to 200 students. The gift will help fund the expansion of the Academy's home, Florence Schneider Hall, while an additional state appropriation will fund the educational expenses.

"The Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science is a great asset for the Commonwealth of Kentucky," Gatton said. "Its students have come from almost every county. It has brought honor to the Commonwealth by its recognition as the nation's number 1 public high school three years in

a row. That's a remarkable achievement. It has great leadership, great faculty and great students. I am proud to have my name associated with it."

Gov. Steve Beshear said the Academy "is a shining example of how our educators are preparing the next generation of highly-trained graduates. I'm proud that my last budget included \$2 million for the Academy, which will allow another 80 students the unparalleled opportunity to study in the nation's best high school. Combined with the generous gift from the Gatton family, even more gifted young Kentuckians will have the chance to surge ahead in their education and enjoy the extraordinary experience of The Gatton Academy."

In addition to Gatton's lead gift, the more than \$10 million Gatton Academy expansion project is being funded by other private donors including Sue and Brown Badgett, Ben and Janine Cundiff, the J. Rogers Badgett Sr. Foundation, Mike and Julie Muscarella, Daksha and Prabod Mehta, and Bill and Sue Hamilton. More at <https://wkunews.wordpress.com/2015/05/06/gatton-expansion-gift/>

### **WKU recognized as a Green Ribbon School by U.S. Department of Education**

Big Red's efforts to go green earned national recognition as WKU is among the 2015 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools Postsecondary Sustainability Awardees.

WKU is one of nine colleges and universities honored on Earth Day with the first Postsecondary Sustainability Award. The announcement was made in Washington, D.C., by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and Managing Director of the White House Council on Environmental Quality Christy Goldfuss.

The U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools award honors public and private elementary, middle and high schools, districts and postsecondary institutions that are exemplary in three Pillars: Reduced Environmental Impacts and Costs; Improved Health and Wellness; and Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education. More at <https://wkunews.wordpress.com/2015/04/22/green-ribbon-2015/>



## **Presidents of Bluegrass CTC, WKU sign joint admissions agreement**

Students at Bluegrass Community and Technical College in Lexington have a direct pipeline to a four-year degree at WKU thanks to a joint admissions agreement signed in May.

The agreement, signed by BCTC President Augusta Julian and WKU President Gary Ransdell, allows students to be admitted to both BCTC and WKU at the same time. The goal is to improve student success and degree attainment at the associate and baccalaureate levels, reduce the time to earn a degree at both the associate and bachelor's degree levels, expand student options for college services, improve academic program articulation, expand financial aid resources to support "two plus two" students, use resources at both institutions more effectively and efficiently, and plan, develop and align instructional programs at the undergraduate level.

This is the eighth agreement WKU has signed with a KCTCS campus. WKU also has agreements with Volunteer State Community College in Gallatin, Tennessee, and Ivy Tech Community College in Evansville, Indiana. More at <https://wkunews.wordpress.com/2015/05/05/wku-bctc-signing/>



*BCTC President Augusta Julian and WKU President Gary Ransdell sign a joint admissions agreement at BCTC.*

## **WKU students earn more national scholarships**

Two WKU students have been awarded David L. Boren Scholarships that will fund a year studying abroad. Tyler Prochazka of Newton, Kansas, will study in China, and Zachary Redmond of Owensboro will study in Jordan. This is the first time two WKU students have received scholarships in the same year.

Four students at The Carol Martin Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science in Kentucky at WKU have been offered nationally competitive scholarships for immersive language study this summer. This number of language scholarships marks the most in The Gatton Academy's eight-year history. The National Security Language Initiative for Youth scholarships are sponsored by the U.S. Department of State and offer complete funding for the six-to-eight week programs.

The students, all seniors, are: Meredith Bickett, Owensboro, who will study in Morocco; India Blasser, Henderson, who will study in Moldova; Sam Booth, Owensboro, who will study in South Korea; and Rena Ryumae, Union, who declined an award to study in South Korea.

## **WKU, Caribbean climate group sign cooperative agreement in Belize**

WKU and the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC) formally signed a cooperative agreement in Belmopan, Belize, that brings to fruition many years of collaboration. The institutions have been working toward the broader goals of addressing climate change in the Caribbean region and also the impacts in Kentucky and elsewhere in the world. The agreement represents the next step in fully realizing the potential of the collaboration between WKU and the CCCCC to address the growing focus on global climate change challenges and follows the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement with the University of Akureyri and the Iceland Arctic Cooperation Network to further cooperation on climate change and establishment of the North Atlantic Climate Change Collaboration (NAC3) project.

Faculty and students at WKU have been involved in projects in the Caribbean region, particularly Belize, with an emphasis on climate change, paleoclimate reconstruction, water resources, karst and cave research, environmental education, sustainability, and other related activities for more than a decade. More at <https://wkunews.wordpress.com/2015/04/28/wku-ccccc-agreement/>